



KEENE CITY COUNCIL
Council Chambers, Keene City Hall
April 17, 2025
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

- 04/03/2025 Minutes

A. HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

1. Community Recognition - Hannah Schroeder - New England Newspaper & Press Association Award Recipient

B. ELECTIONS / NOMINATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / CONFIRMATIONS

1. Confirmation - Conservation Commission

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Keene SwampBats - Request to Discharge Fireworks - July 25, 2025
2. Jim Coppo/Jimmy Tempesta - Request to Discharge Fireworks - First Responder Appreciation Community Day - August 24, 2025
3. Keene Family YMCA - Request for Road Closure - Summit Road - June 8, 2025
4. Adam Toepfer - Request to Update Audio and Data Cables as Part of Downtown Infrastructure Project
5. Ian D. Matheson - Court Street Pedestrian Safety Risks
6. Jennifer Nascimento - Resignation - Human Rights Committee

D. REPORTS - COUNCIL COMMITTEES

1. Pathways for Keene - Request for Use of City Property - 4 on the 4th Road Race - July 4, 2025
2. Keene Pride Festival - Request for Use of City Property - Pride Festival - September 21, 2025
3. Otto's Food and Drink - Request for Permission to Serve Alcohol - Sidewalk Café
4. Policy on the Discharge of Fireworks
5. Withdrawal: Ordinance O-2024-18 - Relating to Licenses and Permits
6. Acceptance of 2025 Wellness Grant
7. Life Insurance and Long Term Disability Insurance
8. Acceptance of Local Source Water Protection Grant

E. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

F. REPORTS - CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

G. REPORTS - BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

H. REPORTS - MORE TIME

1. Councilor Jones - Request for Resolution (Declaration) Honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community

I. ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

J. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. Relating to Adopting the Provisions of RSA 79-E "Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive"
Resolution R-2025-09
2. Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance - Fire Department Staffing
Resolution R-2025-11

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, April 3, 2025. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Kate M. Bosley, Laura E. Tobin, Michael J. Remy, Randy L. Filiault, Robert C. Williams, Edward J. Haas, Philip M. Jones, Andrew M. Madison (arrived at 7:03 PM), Kris E. Roberts, Jacob R. Favolise, Bryan J. Lake, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Thomas F. Powers, and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Catherine I. Workman was absent. Councilor Powers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the minutes of the March 20, 2025, meeting as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilors Madison and Workman were absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn reminded Councilors of Linda Mangones retirement celebration from Keene Housing on April 9, 2025, at the Community Room at 105 Castle Street.

The Mayor also announced six-week summer youth employment opportunities for youths who would be 14 years old but not yet 16 years old as of June 1. Those applications would be accepted until April 20, 2025, and the Mayor hoped to receive an abundance of applicants.

Next, the Mayor reminded the Council that Earth Day week commences April 25, 2025, with the City's Arbor Day event at 11:00 AM. Green Up Keene will be Saturday, April 26, 2025. the Mayor encouraged the Council to visit the Public Works website to see the streets still available for cleanup.

The Mayor noted that the Legislative Delegation would be on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, from 6:00–8:00 PM at Heberton Hall. He encouraged the Council to attend as the City was concerned about several bills. The NH Municipal Association will attend to provide updates.

Lastly, Mayor Kahn reminded everyone of the Master Plan Future Summit on June 3, 2025 at 5:00 PM at Heberton Hall. He encouraged the Council to attend.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION - KSC MEN'S BASKETBALL SENIORS

The Mayor welcomed Athletic Director, Martin Testo, and student athletes: Octavio Brito, Mason Jean-Baptiste, Nate Siow, and Spencer Aronson plus Student Coach Spencer Merkin. Coach Steve Enright could not be present but wanted to ensure this was about celebrating the graduating class and not only individuals. The Mayor spoke about the honor of watching the athletes for the prior four years and this bittersweet moment. Mayor Kahn said basketball, at its core, is a team sport, but wrapped around that core are amazing and remarkable individual achievements.

Individually, the Mayor highlighted the amazing talent on the senior team.

The Mayor also recognized the dedication of Student Coach, Spencer Mirken, who was instrumental in the program's success over the prior four years, contributing significantly to the team's practices, games, and recruiting efforts.

The Mayor concluded that the graduating seniors of KSC Men's Basketball Team demonstrated exceptional dedication, skills, and sportsmanship throughout their careers. They contributed significantly to the rich tradition of KSC athletics, leaving a legacy of excellence and dedication that would inspire future generations of Owls.

BLUE LINE APPRECIATION – RECOGNITION OF POLICE OFFICERS

Mayor Kahn wanted to provide a recap of the Blue Line Recognition event on Sunday, March 30, 2025, because he was unsure that his and Governor Ayotte's comments could be heard sufficiently. He recalled a Proclamation honoring the Keene Police Officers in 2024 because they successfully de-escalated an arrest in the Applebee's parking lot of a person accused of murdering a child's mom, while the child was in the car with a weapon present. Again in 2025, the Keene Police Department (PD) successfully apprehended a suspect in Milford accused of having murdered his girlfriend's 2-year-old son. Mayor Kahn said that is the kind of professionalism we have in the Keene PD. He wanted to recognize how police work has changed over time. He said their professionalism is important to meet those expectations, whether dealing with those facing housing and food insecurity, driving misbehaviors on roadways, drug enforcement, or trying to help those in mental health distress. The Mayor said this was not the kind of police force you see on TV; he said these officers were performing social services in the streets and being visible on foot patrols and downtown events, which is an important element to making everyone feel safe in the community. The Mayor also recognized the families of police officers—and firefighters equally—because it is important that the families provide the kind of love and support these professionals need.

NOMINATION - CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Mayor nominated Katie Kinsella to serve as a regular member of the Conservation Commission, with a term to expire December 31, 2027. The Mayor tabled the nomination until the next regular meeting.

COMMUNICATION - STEPHEN BRAGDON AND CHERYL BELAIR - SAFETY ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DRIVEWAY AT 82 COURT STREET

A follow-up communication was received from Stephen Bragdon & Cheryl Belair regarding continued safety concerns when vehicles exit their driveway at 82 Court Street. Their previous communication requesting consideration of an ordinance restricting parking on either side of the driveway was submitted in November 2023 and reported out as informational in February 2024. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

MSFI REPORT - REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION TO STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE - PROPOSED ROUNDABOUT AT RT 9 AND WHITCOMBS MILL ROAD

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, recommending the City Council authorize the drafting of a letter to the State of New Hampshire, proposing a roundabout be constructed at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Whitcomb's Mill Rd. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault.

Councilor Greenwald noted that he was contacted by a constituent suggesting a traffic signal instead of a roundabout. If the State were to take up this matter, he thought it would consider the best solution for the dangerous cross traffic and speed there before someone would be seriously injured. Councilor Jones noted—in response to the constituent's suggestion to Councilor Greenwald—that this would simply be a letter of communication to the State Commissioners and would not conflict with the 10-Year Plan or anything other projects going on. Mayor Kahn said he would follow through on the will of the Council and prepare a letter. However, he said this seemed like an exceptional effort and he was unsure how often the Council could do this.

Councilor Haas asked if City staff knew the timing of the related development on Whitcomb's Mill Road. City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, said there was a safety audit of this intersection on April 1 with NH Department of Transportation (DOT) staff. It would take DOT two to three months to prepare a preliminary report on those findings. At that point, the City would provide DOT with feedback based on their determination, and a final report would be issued about six months later based on that safety study. The Mayor asked if that audit was conducted by the Public Works Department and the City Engineer said it was in conjunction with DOT after the City requested the safety audit of the intersection to develop recommendations for improving it. DOT would develop preliminary recommendations based on their findings and the City could respond based on its opinion of those recommendations.

The Mayor asked if the DOT investigation would influence the timing of this requested letter calling attention of the Commission to the study. The City Engineer said, in his opinion and based on his previous experiences, the weight of the City's letter would be the most in response to DOT's preliminary findings and recommendations. So, if their preliminary findings and recommendations were to do nothing/something, that would allow the City to agree that something should be done immediately and not on the 10-Year + Plan; or if they find nothing can be done to improve safety, the City could interject and disagree. The City Engineer thought the weight of the City's letter would be more effective if it followed the results of the DOT audit.

Councilor Favolise asked if the recommendation was adopted at this meeting was any reason the Mayor could not wait to send it until the timing was more appropriate. The City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, said no. The Council could place any time frame it wanted on the letter, and without one, it would be at the Mayor's discretion.

Councilor Tobin was curious about how long it would take for the report to come back, questioning whether the letter should happen simultaneously with the audit. She heard the City Engineer say the whole process could take up to six months, which could then add the City to the 10-Year Plan. Mayor Kahn sought guidance from Councilors Powers or Greenwald as to whether to move forward at this meeting.

Councilor Jones was glad for the audit, stating it had nothing to do with his letter. He listed representatives present for the audit, including the City Engineer as well as representatives from the Southwest Regional Planning Commission and Police & Fire Departments. He said the City was looking for other ways to circumvent the 10-Year Plan, and he cited past cases of that working for and against the City with money taken from one project and used for another. Those were the other processes he wanted the City to look at. Councilor Jones said he wanted to get that on the minds of Commissioners as soon as possible to start looking at those other processes.

Councilor Greenwald saw no reason to delay. He thought that by sending the letter, it might draw attention to the study, and then the City could send another letter in six months when it is completed. The Mayor said he could understand that action. The motion to carry out the intent of the Committee report carried on a vote of 13–1. Councilor Powers opposed. Councilor Workman was absent.

MSFI REPORT - MONADNOCK VIEW CEMETERY: SECTION B NEW CREMATION LOTS

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, recommending the City Council approve additional cremation lots in Section B of the Monadnock View Cemetery. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Filiault. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

MSFI REPORTS - FORMER FINDINGS PROPERTY AND KEENE SKATE PARK PROJECT UPDATE; DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE; & ROUTE 9 RESTRIPIING PROJECT UPDATE

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, recommending the update on the former Findings property and the skate park project be accepted as informational. A second Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending accepting the verbal update on the Downtown Infrastructure Project as informational. A third Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending the verbal update on the Route 9 Restriping Project be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn filed all three reports as informational.

FOP REPORT - ENGINEERING AGREEMENT WITH WRIGHT PIERCE FOR MARTEL COURT BYPASS SEWER FORCE MAIN FINAL DESIGN

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute an engineering services agreement with Wright Pierce for the final Design of the Martel Court Sewer Force Main Bypass Project (32JM012A), up to \$650,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

FOP REPORT - RIGHT OF WAY (ROW) ACQUISITIONS FOR THE GEORGE ST BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute temporary and

permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the George Street replacement bridge, up to the aggregate amount of \$40,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

FOP REPORT - RIGHT OF WAY (ROW) ACQUISITIONS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION HERITAGE TRAIL PHASE 1 PROJECT

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and execute permanent easements with abutting property owners necessary for the construction and future maintenance of the Transportation Heritage Trail (THT) Phase 1 Project, up to the amount of \$10,000. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Jones noted that this came to the Council from constituents living in the area when there was a public hearing on Phase 1. So, he thought this was addressing that problem and would be good for all. The Mayor agreed, noting that he walked this trail from Eastern Avenue with Councilor Haas, Chuck Redfern, and Public Works Director Don Lussier. Mayor Kahn said this would be a real improvement from the existing runoff. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

FOP REPORT - LEGISLATIVE ITEMS OF CONCERN

A Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager or Mayor be authorized to write letters weighing in on behalf of the City on the various bills discussed this evening.

The City Clerk read into the record all of the bills under consideration and the City's positions on each:

- **Support:** Senate Bill 245 – Prohibiting Surprise Ambulance Billing and Regulating Ground Ambulance Reimbursement
- **Oppose:** House Bill 316 – Relative to Reimbursement for Ground Ambulance Services
- **Oppose:** House Bill 410 – Limiting Local Authority to Adopt Restrictions on the Building and Development of Residential Properties
- **Oppose:** House Bill 675 – Limiting the Authority of School Districts to Make Certain Appropriations
- **Oppose:** Senate Bill 291 – Relative to the Religious Use of Land Property Tax Exemption
- **Oppose:** Senate Bill 297 – Relative to Pooled Risk Management Programs
- **Oppose:** The Trailer Bill dealing with the State budget. The City would oppose any cuts to revenues, advocate to maintain Granite Advantage changes to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicaid, and Medicaid Advantage programs. All of these would impact the Human Services Department budget.

Councilor Jones asked if the City would address this at the Legislative Delegation meeting.

Councilor Filiault agreed with the City Manager's comments, having attended the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee meeting. Councilor Filiault called these bills essential and pointed out that House Bill 675 was trying to take away complete local control from taxpayers and the School Board for school spending. Councilor Filiault thought this was the State Legislature testing whether it could do away with local control and said it would come for the City Council and municipalities soon. He recalled Councilor Roberts calling many existing Legislators anti-union, and Councilor Filiault stated that, "if they can come, and go around, and go against Fire Union, Police Union, Public Works; they'll see it as a victory. So local control gets hijacked by legislative control." Councilor Filiault agreed with all the bills the City was set to oppose, especially House Bill 675 because of the serious consequences for the taxpayers of the City that he outlined. He asked what would happen if the City were to lose control of its property taxes next. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Powers pointed out that for years, many believed NH was a home rule state, and it was not. He stated that home rule states "don't mess it up in the fashion that this Legislature has done for years." As such, Councilor Powers felt this was one of the most important years for the City to take a position on everything because it would be helping everybody the City serves. Mayor Kahn referenced the draft letter on House Bill 675 in the meeting packet, which he shared with the other mayors in the State. At this time, six others had signed it, too. The letter was directed to the Senate, acknowledging that the House had already probably embedded this into its appropriation legislation. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

FOP REPORT - TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL FUNDS TO ADDRESS LIBRARY BUDGET SHORTFALL

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending that the City Manager or Mayor be authorized to allocate \$47,000 from the FY25 Public Works Winter Operations wage lines to the FY25 library part-time wage-related accounts. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Remy.

Councilor Filiault declared a Conflict of Interest because his wife works part-time at the Library. With no objections from the Council, Mayor Kahn accepted Councilor Filiault's recusal.

Councilor Williams said he was impressed by how the Library Manager and Assistant Manager had worked to make this right, working above and beyond to address this problem. He appreciated it. The motion carried unanimously with 13 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Filiault abstained. Councilor Workman was absent.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, began by recognizing Parking Manager, Chelsea North, and Deputy City Manager, Rebecca Landry, for their leadership in developing a thoughtful pilot program for the Wells Street Parking Garage. This proposal would support downtown employees and residents while improving overall access to public parking. A "pilot" program would overlap the timing of the permits with vacancies during the day in an attempt to better utilize the spaces.

However, she said there would need to be some experimentation to get the numbers right and attempt to avoid conflicts. The pilot included:

- Evening Employee Permits: 25 reserved spaces on the lower level from 3:00 PM–1:00 AM at \$30/month.
- Overnight Resident Permits: 10 spaces available on the lower level from 5:00 PM–8:00 AM.
- Expanded Public Parking: Free parking on the upper level is extended by one hour—from 4:00 PM–1:00 AM. (additional free parking for those working later shifts in the downtown area)

This trial would help assess demand, test operational logistics, and align with the City’s goals of improving downtown access while maintaining financial and operational sustainability. As well as addressing concerns related to improving downtown parking opportunities for employees of downtown businesses.

Next, the City Manager shared some updates on City solar projects:

- Keene Dillant-Hopkins Airport: Updated the site layout for the proposed solar project, now utilizing development parcels 12 and 14 (she shared the draft layout). Due to increased Runway Protection Zone requirements and protection of a grasshopper sparrow habitat, the system was downsized slightly to 5.5MW DC (3.5MW AC), with an estimated annual production of 6.49 million kWh. This redesign would help lower interconnection costs, and she was hopeful for a study agreement from Eversource in the summer of 2025. Bird surveys required by NH Fish & Game would be conducted this season, and she anticipated the System Impact Study to begin in late fall 2025.
- Rose Lane: This is a smaller project with State permitting progressing. The Shoreland Permit was approved, and the Alteration of Terrain permit was under NH Department of Environmental Services review. Eversource had approved the interconnection, and Revision Energy expected to begin local permitting later in spring 2025.
- Monadnock View/Cedarcrest Solar Project: Development of the Cedarcrest solar project was well underway. Cedarcrest was aiming to begin construction in summer of 2025, pending final permitting and completion of the land sale. The Parks & Recreation Department had been actively engaged to ensure coordination during the construction phase. Councilors received an email outlining details of this project, particularly relating to the community garden. The City Manager specifically recognized Recreation Director, Carrah Fisk-Hennessy, who worked extensively with the community gardeners to develop an interim solution for this growing season. Thanks to the collaboration of Public Works, a portion of the new garden area will be made available this season to ensure continuity for gardeners. The City Manager also extended her appreciation to Councilor Tobin and Mayor Kahn for their efforts to facilitate these important conversations, calling this a strong example of how the City can balance progress with responsiveness to community needs.

The City Manager concluded with an update about the Farmers’ Market. The Public Works Department and City Clerk’s Office were meeting with all licensed downtown vendors to discuss the upcoming downtown construction project—what to expect and how the City could best accommodate outdoor commerce. The Mayor had suggested holding a separate meeting with

Farmers' Market representatives, tentatively scheduled for the week of April 7. This dedicated meeting would focus specifically on the plans for the solar pavilion project on Gilbo Avenue, including the anticipated construction timeline and identifying alternative downtown locations for the Farmers' Market to operate during the 2027 season. Given the rising cost of food, the City Manager said access to fresh, locally grown options is more important than ever. So, supporting the Farmers' Market during this transition would be essential to maintaining access to affordable food options.

REPORTS - RESIGNATION - JUDE NURU - ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE

A memorandum read from Megan Fortson, Planner, recommending that the Council accept the resignation of Jude Nuru from the Energy & Climate Committee with gratitude for his four years of service. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to accept the resignation with thanks was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent. Mayor Kahn pointed out the vacancy on the Energy & Climate Committee. Anyone interested in serving on any City committee could submit a volunteer interest form on the City website at any time.

MORE TIME - MSFI REPORTS - CARL JACOBS - INSTALLATION OF A PEACE POLE - CENTRAL SQUARE; & PROPOSAL TO ADD THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE BANNERS ACROSS MAIN STREET

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, recommending placing this item (Installation of a Peace Pole) on more time. A second Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending placing this item (Proposal to Add the Necessary Infrastructure to Accommodate Banners) on more time with the intent that staff return with an update at the next meeting. Mayor Kahn granted more time for both reports.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING; RELATING TO AN AMENDMENT OF THE CITY CODE, REGARDING STOP SIGNS - ORDINANCE O-2025-10; RELATING TO AN AMENDMENT OF THE CITY CODE, REGARDING YIELD SIGNS - ORDINANCE O-2025-11; RELATING TO AN AMENDMENT OF THE CITY CODE, REGARDING TRAFFIC SIGNALS - ORDINANCE O-2025-12; RELATING TO AN AMENDMENT OF THE CITY CODE, REGARDING VEHICLE TURNING LIMITATIONS - ORDINANCE O-2025-13; & RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF A STOP SIGN ON WILBER STREET AT WATER STREET - ORDINANCE O-2025-14

Four memoranda read from City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, recommending that Ordinances O-2025-10, O-2025-11, O-2025-12, and O-2025-13 be referred to the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee for their review and recommendation. Additionally, a Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be directed to draft an Ordinance to add a stop sign on Wilber St. at its intersection with Water Street. Mayor Kahn referred Ordinances O-2025-10, O-2025-11, O-2025-12, O-2025-13, and O-2025-14 to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee.

RESOLUTION - RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE FOR THE FY 25 FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL BUDGET - RESOLUTION R-2025-10

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, recommending adoption of Resolution R-2025-10. A motion by Councilor Powers to adopt Resolution R-2025-10 was duly seconded by Councilor Remy. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, noted that at the FOP Committee meeting, she began explaining Resolution R-2025-11 for the hiring of four firefighters. In contrast, this Resolution R-2025-10 was about overtime. The City Manager explained that the Council was being asked to take \$490,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to keep a minimum staffing level of 12 firefighters; at this time, the minimum staffing level was 10. Currently there were 11 employees per shift, but not all 11 were available to work and count toward the minimum. Thus, the City was paying two firefighters overtime each shift to reach 12 until the end of the fiscal year. The City Manager said Resolution R-2025-10 would address this. Staff reviewed the Fire Department budget, estimated where wage lines would be at the end of the year, and combined those into this one Resolution so they would be appropriately funded in their wage and overtime lines until the end of the fiscal year. This would allow for keeping the 12 minimum firefighters required to run the third ambulance. The City Manager also told the Council that she recently met with Cheshire County in her efforts to seek immediate and less costly solutions. She said the County did not have the capacity to staff the skilled nursing facilities, which was driving the increase in the City's calls. So, she said this solution with Resolution R-2025-10 was the quickest way to have the staff needed for the third ambulance on every shift.

The City Manager also took a moment to address the next agenda item, Resolution R-2025-11, noting that it was not before them for vote this evening and was only being referred to Committee. It would be for wages for four extra firefighters, increasing from 11 to 12 per shift, but it still would not put the City above the 12 minimum, causing overtime issues. The FY-26 wages for the four firefighters alone were anticipated to be \$529,000 for the whole year. Resolution R-2025-11 would be for wages to bring four firefighters on Board for only one month of the fiscal year—the month of June—and gear and equipment for that month. She said there were additional revenues coming into the Ambulance Department to fund the firefighter request for this year, but not the four firefighters in the coming years. So, the City Manager estimated the increase to be approximately \$200,000 above what the City budgeted for, which she would keep an eye on. Regardless, the money would be in the Fund Balance for what she requested for the remainder of this fiscal year's budget. Resolution R-2025-11 was for one month—\$70,067—and she asked the Council to refer it to FOP to increase the manpower from 11 firefighters to 12 per shift.

The City Manager continued, explaining another level of confusion. She recalled that in January 2025, the Council authorized a SAFER Grant application for four firefighters per shift, totaling 16 firefighters. To date, the Grant has not been released. She was still planning to apply for the SAFER Grant but told the Council if it did not come out, the Council would see another request from her in the next fiscal year for four more firefighters—one more per shift for 13 per shift total. She said that keeping the minimum at 12 per shift would not be feasible because there is always someone on leave/vacation/sick, and it is not sustainable for the City always to be paying overtime to keep the 12 minimum. The City Manager was waiting to see if the Grant would become a reality before making that decision.

Lastly, the City Manager explained that if the Council adopted Resolution R-2025-11 at the next Council meeting, that cost would be added to the base of the Budget. The Fiscal Policy gives the City Manager a certain amount of funds for the entire budget based on the Cost-of-Living Index

04/03/2025

and this would not be a part of that. So, the budget would start \$529,000 higher, with an anticipated increase in revenue of approximately \$200,000.

The motion to adopt Resolution R-2025-10 carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

**RESOLUTION - RELATING TO THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FROM THE
GENERAL FUND UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE - FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING -
RESOLUTION R-2025-11**

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report read, unanimously recommending the introduction of a Resolution to appropriate funds to hire four additional firefighters (one per shift) for approximately \$529,000 per year. A memorandum from Jason Martin, Fire Chief, recommending that the City Council approve the appropriation of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance in the amount of seventy thousand sixty-seven dollars (\$70,067.00) to fund salaries and equipment for four (4) new, additional firefighters. Mayor Kahn referred the memorandum to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

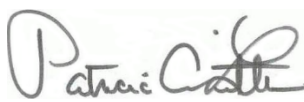
NON-PUBLIC SESSION

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to go into a non-public session to discuss land matters under RSA 91-A:3 II (d) was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent. The non-public session began at 8:13 PM. The non-public session ended at 8:42PM.

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to keep the minutes of the non-public session non-public, as disclosure would render the proposed action ineffective, was duly seconded by Councilor Bosley. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 14 Councilors present and voting in favor. Councilor Workman was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

A true record, attest: 

City Clerk



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #B.1.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Confirmation - Conservation Commission**

Council Action:

In City Council April 3, 2025.

Nomination tabled until the next regular meeting.

Recommendation:

Attachments:

None

Background:

I hereby nominate the following individual to serve on the designated Board or Commission:

Conservation Commission

Katie Kinsella (Slot 1)

Term to Expire December 31, 2027

21 Hancock Street



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.1.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Kevin Watterson
President - Keene SwampBats
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Keene SwampBats - Request to Discharge Fireworks - July 25, 2025**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Communication_Watterson

Background:

Kevin Watterson of the Keene SwampBats, is requesting permission for the discharge of fireworks on Alumni Field on Friday, July 25, 2025, as part of their ***Host Family Appreciation Night*** festivities.



Mar 27, 2025

City of Keene
Keene City Council
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431

City Council Members:

Per this letter, the Keene SwampBats request your approval to host a Class B Fireworks Display on **Friday, July 25th**.

This fireworks event would take place at Keene's Alumni Field on Arch Street, immediately following the regularly scheduled SwampBats game that evening. Fireworks traditionally are shot off at approximately 9:45 pm. This is a significant date for our 2025 season, as **July 25th is our last Friday regular season game and our Host Family Appreciation Night**. We will supply a Letter of Approval from the SAU 29 and an Insurance Rider naming the City of Keene as a co-insured.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kevin D. Watterson, President
Keene SwampBats



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.2.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Jim Coppo/Jimmy Tempesta
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Jim Coppo/Jimmy Tempesta - Request to Discharge Fireworks - First Responder Appreciation Community Day - August 24, 2025**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Coppo_Communication_2025_Redacted

Background:

Mr. Coppo and Mr. Tempesta request a license to discharge fireworks at Alumni Field as part of the First Responder Appreciation Community Day held on August 24, 2025.

April 15,2025

City of Keene
Honorable Mayor & City Council
3 Washington St
Keene, NH 03431

To: Honorable Mayor Jay Kahn & City Council

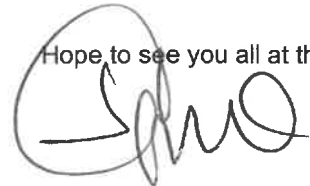
Please let this letter serve as our request and seek permission to include a fireworks display at our very unique, the First Responder Appreciation Community Day, event on Sunday, August 24th at Alumni Field. This event will be open to the public, will have Police, Firefighters, Ambulance personnel, Dispatchers along with dignitaries and guest speakers. This event will be an extension to our 'Blue Line Appreciation' event we host at the restaurant.

The day will be filled with family fun, have all area equipment on display and meet and greets with the hero's, in addition to demonstrations by City, State and County departments.

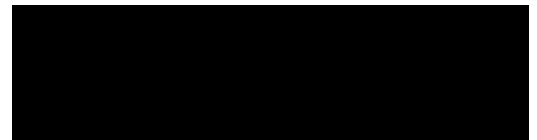
I have attached a set of fliers for out to see. The fireworks display will be a music themed special First Responder colored show for 10 minute slot at the completion of the City Fire vs Police game.

The show will be done by Atlas Pyrovision Entertainment, the same company that does Swampbat games. They will use the same location as the always do.

Hope to see you all at the event,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Copp' or 'Jimmy Tempesta', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Jim Copp/Jimmy Tempesta





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.3.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Kelly Fleurette – Senior Program Director
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Keene Family YMCA - Request for Road Closure - Summit Road - June 8, 2025**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Keene Family YMCA 2025 Letter to Mayor and Council_Redacted

Background:

The Keene Family YMCA is requesting the closure of Summit Road on Sunday, June 8, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM for a Youth Triathlon Race.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

the KEENE FAMILY YMCA

April 3, 2025

To Honorable Mayor and City Council,

The Keene Family YMCA is requesting a full road closure of Summit Road in Keene NH on Sunday June 8, 2025, from 8:00am-11:00am for a Youth Triathlon Race. The closure will start just past the Y entrance to the end of the road. We will be using Summit Road as a loop (up and back) for the bike portion of the race and the remaining race will take place on the YMCA property.

We will work with the City Protocol team to use city barriers to close off Summit Road just after the Y entrance and Summit Ridge off Summit Road. We will work with the police department regarding a police detail for the hours they are racing (9-1030am). We will have about 20 volunteers assisting as course marshals.

The YMCA will communicate with our neighbors regarding the road closure and will have volunteers ready to assist with cars to and from their homes as needed.

Kelly Fleurette
Senior Program Director
Keene Family YMCA
200 Summit Rd
Keene, NH 03431

kfleurette@keene-ymca.org



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.4.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Adam Toepfer - President Keene Pride
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: **Adam Toepfer - Request to Update Audio and Data Cables as Part of Downtown Infrastructure Project**

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Communications_Toepfer_flat

Background:

Adam Toepfer has submitted the attached letter on behalf of Keene Pride and several other local event organizations, requesting the City consider incorporating XLR audio cables and fiber data cables, terminating to multiple RJ-45 jacks, into the downtown infrastructure to enhance the capacity and quality of festivals and events held in the downtown area.



Mayor Jay Kahn & Keene City Council
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431

April 10, 2025

Dear Honorable Mayor Jay Kahn and City Council Members,

Dear Members of the Keene City Council,

On behalf of Keene Pride and several other local event organizations, I write to respectfully request the City of Keene consider incorporating XLR audio cables and fiber data cables, terminating to multiple RJ-45 jacks, into the downtown infrastructure. This investment would significantly enhance the capacity and quality of festivals and events held in our vibrant city center.

We propose that these cables be run through the following areas:

- Around Central Square
- Down Main Street, ending at Emerald Street
- Railroad Square
- Gilbo Avenue, extending to St. James Street
- Roxbury Street to the Hannah Grimes parking lot

These locations represent key spaces where many of Keene's most cherished public events take place. By installing this infrastructure, the city would enable seamless access to audio, music, data, and video connections—streamlining logistics, improving accessibility, and enhancing the overall experience for residents, visitors, and organizers alike.

We would also like to encourage the city to include some sort of ballast system that can be automatically deployed to close streets quickly and inexpensively in the downtown area for festivals and other events.

Moreover, the addition of fiber data lines could potentially support free public Wi-Fi in the downtown area, offering a valuable amenity that benefits businesses, tourists, and the community at large. This initiative has the full support of the following local organizations, whose signatures are also included on this letter:

- Keene Pride, organizers of the Keene Pride Festival



603-696-2927



www.keenepride.org



25 Roxbury St. #114
Keene, NH 03431



- The Keene Downtown Group, organizers of the Keene Ice & Snow Festival
- Let It Shine, organizers of the Keene Pumpkin Festival
- Keene Young Professionals Network, organizers of the Keene Food Festival

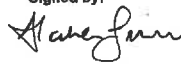
Together, we believe this infrastructure will have a lasting, positive impact on the success and sustainability of downtown events. We would be glad to work with city staff to discuss the technical requirements or help coordinate implementation.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of Keene's dynamic and inclusive event community.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

 908C1FA08751476...
 Adam Toepfer
 President, Keene Pride

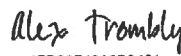
Signed by:

 FA70AA43E27D49B...
 Alana Fiero
 President, Keene Young Professionals
 Network

Signed by:

 A3931C692EA9461...
 Mark Rebillard
 The Keene Downtown Group

Signed by:

 A184CCD1151E46A...
 Mike Giacomo
 Let It Shine, Inc.

DocuSigned by:

 1FFC8F42A6B8461...
 Alex Trombly
 AMT Productions



603-696-2927



www.keenepride.org



25 Roxbury St. #114
 Keene, NH 03431



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.5.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Ian D. Matheson
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: Ian D. Matheson - Court Street Pedestrian Safety Risks

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Ian Matheson Letter to Mayor and Council_Redacted

Background:

Mr. Matheson is requesting a review of the crosswalks along Court Street to address pedestrian safety concerns with signage or some other means to alert motorists. The letter speaks in particular to safety issues with the crosswalk at the intersection of Court Street and Elm Street.

Ian D. Matheson, CFI

15 April 2025

(Via email to plittle@keeneh.gov)

The Honorable Jay Kahn
Mayor of the City of Keene
3 Washington St. Keene, NH 03431

Re: Court Street Pedestrian Safety Risks

Dear Mayor Kahn and Councilmembers,

I am writing to you regarding my growing concerns with pedestrian safety on Court Street – specifically from Central Square to Mechanic Street – and the risks presented to pedestrians using the crossings. The concerns are not only for my safety but also for the safety of our most vulnerable populations. Moreover, these concerns are further exacerbated by the excessive speed of most motorists operating along Court Street. To be clear, this request is not for additional police enforcement of speed or yielding to pedestrians. While enforcement does have a place in mitigation, this will not address the underlying safety and community concerns alone.

The core concerns and issues live with the lack of visible signage and infrastructure to alter motorists of upcoming pedestrian crossings. Both pedestrians and drivers share a balanced responsibility for roadway safety; it is nearly impossible for this to occur when motorists are unaware of an upcoming crossing due to a lack of signage and clear markings in the roadway. Pedestrians are placed in a dangerous position when they must physically enter the roadway for a motorist to see them crossing and then stop within time. On more than one occasion, I have observed and experienced the fear of standing in the middle of the roadway, hoping that motorists will stop as they race to your front and rear. This is not a singular problem that blame can be cast upon one group over another – this is a societal problem, one that cannot be solved with some signs and enforcement. However, it can be mitigated.

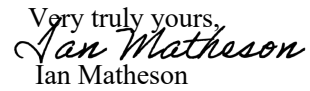
Recently, I approached the Public Works department with these concerns. I was encouraged to send my concerns to them, and they would look into them to determine the best course of action. My request was for “some sort of pedestrian beacon or other traffic calming measure (to) be implemented”. I have attached several photos of the specific intersection of concern (Court Street and Mechanic Street). I was provided with the following response from the Public Works staff, “*The City has adopted the Federal "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" as our standard for signs and traffic controls. Traffic volume on Court Street in proximity to Mechanic Street is roughly 9,100 vehicles per day during the workweek based on the traffic data that is available to the City. The MUTCD recommends consideration of crosswalk enhancements (i.e. curb extensions, raised medians, pedestrian beacons, etc.) where "The road has four or more lanes of travel without a raised median or pedestrian refuge island and an ADT of 12,000 vehicles per day or greater" Court Street at this location has two lanes of traffic and does not exceed the threshold and Public Works does not recommend that the installation of a pedestrian active Rectangular, Rapidly Flashing Beacon (RRFB) be installed at this locations based on the Engineering Review of the location, the site specific traffic data and the MUTCD specified warrants.*”

I appreciate the adherence to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices; however, this response fails to address the lack of basic pedestrian crossing signage and alternative safety improvements. The lack of clearly visible cues (something that is present on other similar motorways in the City) to alert motorists and pedestrians leaves this section of the street unnecessarily dangerous to all.

Court Street Pedestrian Safety Risks
The Honorable Mayor and Council
15 April 2025

- 2 -

Therefore, I would appreciate time before you all to discuss this matter further. I fear that if this section of Court Street – and the various pedestrian crossings – are not reviewed further through additional consideration and dialogue, the outcome may be grave.

Very truly yours,

Ian Matheson

Encl.

Court St Crosswalks - Attachment 1

8 January 2025

Re: Court St Crosswalks - Attachment 1

Image 1: The red arrow indicates the crossing in question.



Image 1-a: Crosswalk at Court and Mechanic Street.



8 January 2025

- 2 -

Re: Court St Crosswalks - Attachment 1

Image 2: Facing north from the odd side of Court Street at the corner of Mechanic Street.



Image 3: Facing north from the even side of Court Street.



Image 4: Facing south from the even side of Court Street.



Image 5: Facing south from the odd side of Court Street, at the corner of Mechanic Street.



8 January 2025

- 4 -

Re: Court St Crosswalks - Attachment 1

Image 6: Pedestrian crossing from odd to even side.



8 January 2025

- 5 -

Re: Court St Crosswalks - Attachment 1

Image 7: Pedestrian crossing from odd to even side.





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.6.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Jennifer Nascimento
Through: Patricia Little, City Clerk
Subject: Jennifer Nascimento - Resignation - Human Rights Committee

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. Resignation

Background:

Ms. Nascimento has submitted her resignation from service on the Human Rights Committee effective March 3, 2025. Ms. Nascimento has served on the board since 2023.

To Whom it may concern,

I Jennifer Nascimento am
resigning from the Keene HRC
on March 3, 2025.

Jennifer Nascimento



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.1.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Pathways for Keene - Request for Use of City Property - 4 on the 4th Road Race - July 4, 2025

Recommendation:

On a vote 4–0, the Planning, Licenses & Development Committee recommends the City Council grant permission to Pathways for Keene to sponsor a running race on Friday, July 4th, 2025, subject to the signing of a revocable license and indemnification agreement and the submittal of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 listing the City of Keene as an additional insured. In addition, the Police Department shall identify Railroad Street immediately adjacent to Railroad Square as a No Parking zone from the hours of 6:00 AM to 11:00 AM. This license is conditional upon the petitioners providing an adequate number of volunteer race marshals to ensure runner safety along the course, and subject to any recommendations of City staff. The Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 26 Community Events Budget. Said payment shall be made within 30 days of the date of invoicing. Councilor Jones abstained.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley welcomed introductory comments from Deputy City Manager, Rebecca Landry, who attended the event protocol meetings. She provided the following details of the Pathways for Keene 4 on the 4th Road Race on July 4, 2025, from 6:00–11:00 AM:

- Running race with approximately 700 runners and walkers, about 1,200 total attendees including the spectators.
- Race starts at 7:30 AM.
- Partial closures of Railroad Street, Community Way, 93rd Street, and a small section of the service road for the Well Street Parking Garage, as well as a detour at Railroad and 93rd Streets.
- The sponsor notifying impacted parties who may be impacted by any road closures for the event date, such as the Co-Op and the Marriott.

- Ten to 20 race marshals requested by the City at various locations.
- The sponsors arranging for private traffic control at Water Street and the bike path, at Eastern Avenue and the bike path, and at the Marlboro Street intersection for everyone's safety.
- The Police Department at the start and the finish lines for security reasons. The Police communicate with the Race Director immediately prior to the start of the race and clear the course. The Fire Department was also involved in the protocol process and would provide one ambulance within the race footprint.
- Public Works and Parking Departments were also very much involved in the protocol process and preparing for and supporting the event, which Ms. Landry thought was great.

Chair Bosley welcomed the applicant, Ted McGreer (of 115 Main Street), who noted that this would be the 23rd annual Race, with every dollar going back to the trail system. He noted that Pathways for Keene is a 100% volunteer board, with President Janelle Sartorio at this time, and Mr. McGreer as Vice President. Mr. McGreer said the Race had grown into a nice summer community event, and they were grateful for the licenses over the years.

Councilor Jones pointed out that he was a Board member for Pathways for Keene (on file with the Clerk's office) but said he had no pecuniary interest in this matter. Chair Bosley thought it was ideal for the Vice Chair to not vote on this matter. With no opposition, the Chair accepted Vice Chair Jones' recusal. However, Vice Chair Jones reported that this Race had raised over \$1 million for the City of Keene over the years, noting that 2025 had been one of the best years for the Pathways for Keene Board. Mr. McGreer agreed, adding that the charitable gaming casinos contributed a lot, but the 4th Race generated approximately \$45,000/year, with about 200 local businesses sponsoring it. There is a big party at the end, with a hot dog eating contest, a dance contest, live music, and more. Chair Bosley agreed it was a considerable amount of money donated back to the community over 23 years. Councilor Jones said it is Pathways' largest fundraiser of the year and one of the few community events for which all the funds are donated to the City.

There were no public comments.

Councilor Madison committed to running the Race this year, for the record.

Councilor Williams made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Haas.

On a vote 4–0, the Planning, Licenses & Development Committee recommends the City Council grant permission to Pathways for Keene to sponsor a running race on Friday, July 4th, 2025, subject to the signing of a revocable license and indemnification agreement and the submittal of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 listing the City of Keene as an additional insured. In addition, the Police Department shall identify Railroad Street immediately adjacent to Railroad Square as a No Parking zone from the hours of 6:00 AM to 11:00 AM. This license is conditional upon the petitioners providing an adequate number of volunteer race marshals to ensure runner safety along the course, and subject to any recommendations of City staff. The Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 26 Community Events Budget. Said payment shall be made within 30 days of the date of invoicing. Councilor Jones abstained.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.2.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Keene Pride Festival - Request for Use of City Property - Pride Festival - September 21, 2025

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends granting Keene Pride permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Sunday, September 21, 2025, for a Pride Festival, subject to the following: submission of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000, naming the City of Keene as an additional insured; execution of a standard revocable license and indemnification agreement; agreement by the Petitioner to cover any City service costs exceeding the allocated City funding, with payment due within 30 days of invoicing; Licensee is permitted to place 12 total portable toilets and one dumpster in City parking spaces located at the following locations: The base of Washington Street, Railroad Street, Roxbury Plaza from Friday, September 19, 2025 to Monday September 22, 2025, the portable toilets will be chained together and affixed to ensure they are not vandalized while unattended overnight; submission of signed letters of permission from private property owners for any use of their property; and, compliance with all required permits, licenses, applicable laws, and any recommendations from City staff. The event footprint and layout shall include the traveled portions of Central Square, Washington Street from Vernon Street to Central Square, Court Street from Winter Street to Central Square, Roxbury Street from Roxbury Plaza (easterly side of Hannah Grimes Parking Lot) to Central Square, West Street from Federal Street to Central Square, Main Street northbound from Emerald Street/Eagle Court to Central Square, Railroad Square, Railroad Street from Roxbury Plaza to Church Street. Road closures may also extend to other streets as necessary for detour routes, with final closure and detour plans determined in coordination with City staff. The event will take place from 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM, with setup and cleanup times to be coordinated with City staff. Free parking is granted under the City's free parking policy for designated spaces on Washington Street and Roxbury Plaza for equipment storage from September 22, 2025, as well as for event footprint on the day of the festival.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley welcomed the applicant, Adam Toepfer, Board President of the 4th Keene Pride Festival, who discussed how much it had grown. In 2024, there were over 115 booths within Central Square, so there was a need to expand. This year, they requested to expand down Main Street, stopping the festival just south of Railroad Street, but Main Street would be closed to the area around Emerald Street. This year, they also requested extending the festival by one hour, from 12:00–7:00 PM (vs. 6:00 PM) to accommodate the amount of programming that could not fit into six hours. Chair Bosley called that a good problem to have.

Chair Bosley requested staff comments. Rebecca Landry, Deputy City Manager, provided the following details about this year's event:

- Road closures: Central Square and portions of Washington Street and Court Street, Roxbury Street, West Street, Main Street, Railroad Square, and Railroad Street.
- A detour for all northbound traffic on Main Street at Emerald Street. Public Works Department putting up detour signage in the morning.
- Many barricades and other equipment and put in various locations to ensure that traffic and pedestrian safety do not collide and that there are no vehicles in the footprint.
- Police Department assisting with traffic control and putting out press release and other information about all the road closures, parking restrictions, the detours, as well as providing Officers from set up to clean up.
- Parking Services posting No Parking signs in advance on kiosks and pay stations (vs. meters in past).
- Fire Department personnel from 11:00 AM until the streets are reopened. Also, Fire personnel at the turning lane on Main Street near the flagpole, to help mitigate due to issues there when stopping traffic at that point in the past. Additionally, a fire engine at Emerald Street and Eagle Court.
- Community Development and Parks and Recreation Departments also providing support.

Though not event-related, Chair Bosley pointed out that the Council had made an effort to move away from the Public Works Department using heavier equipment, and she wondered if the City would be in a position to use barriers instead of equipment in the near future. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, said there were pros and cons because the larger equipment allowed the City to close and reopen quicker. Barriers are typically set up farther in advance and stored in some downtown parking places. The City Manager said barriers were discussed as a part of the downtown project, but it would not be happening now. Mr. Toepfer stated that for the nature of an event like Keene Pride, with visitors who are unfortunately a target for some people who want to cause harm, the organizers prefer the larger equipment as a barrier protecting the patrons from vehicles.

Councilor Haas asked if there was a specification to the weight/size of these barrier equipment vehicles. The City Manager compared them to very large dump trucks. Councilor Haas asked because he wondered if there might be an opportunity for private contractors to have their vehicles used and advertising in the process. Deputy City Manager Landry said City vehicles are used so City staff can move the vehicles quickly if needed. She agreed that when deciding whether to use a concrete or movable barricade, the most paramount consideration is always what is safest for the attendees or anybody downtown, using the minimal equipment necessary to meet maximum safety requirements. Councilor Haas said he would take it upon himself to explore the possibilities for private contractors.

Councilor Jones thought back to the first time Keene Pride applied for an Event License, and he questioned the time of year they chose, which he said proved right. Councilor Jones thanked the organizers for making it a true success. Mr. Toepfer recognized the Keene Pride Board, including the original Board members and over 100 dedicated volunteers. Councilor Jones said the dedication showed.

Chair Bosley opened the floor to public comments.

Mayor Kahn spoke unrelated to the Keene Pride Festival. He spoke about the concern from Main Street businesses during partial street shutdowns, when large vehicles are parked in front of their stores, inhibiting view of their storefronts. He said it was not an issue with the degree of closures for this event, but he felt the need to mention what constituents told to him. He asked the PLD Committee to consider it when providing Event Licenses with partial closures of Main Street in the future. Chair Bosley agreed that this was not related to Keene Pride Festival and said it was really more of a Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee conversation about how to accomplish these closures appropriately, aesthetically, and safely. During the downtown reconstruction, Mr. Toepfer wished for the City to install the barricades that would lift out of the streets. Chair Bosley agreed, stating that Public Works was trying to find a compromise. Mr. Toepfer added that he would be submitting a formal request on behalf of all festivals about installing data cables and audio cables for festivals and events in all of downtown. Chair Bosley said that would be great.

Vice Chair Jones made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Madison.

Councilor Madison added that the Festival was well-run every year, and he heard great feedback from community members and business owners. While there were efforts to minimize this community at the National and State levels, Councilor Madison was really happy Keene was throwing an even bigger party. Mr. Toepfer agreed that Keene's support for the LGBTQ+ community was really important at this time.

Peter Vogel (of 189 Center St., Sullivan, NH) of Monadnock Action, an indivisible affiliated group getting started in the area, echoed that this is a critical time to show support for the LGBTQIA+ community. Mr. Vogel said Monadnock Action identified some concerning legislative actions at the national and state levels threatening this community, citing once-unthinkable actions by certain federal agencies very quickly coming to pass. He said every statement the City could make to support this effort and the LGBTQIA+ community was critically important at this time. Mr. Vogel stated symbols and actions matter, noting too many institutions had failed to stand up to protect marginalized and threatened communities. He said this sent a powerful message.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends granting Keene Pride permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Sunday, September 21, 2025, for a Pride Festival, subject to the following conditions:

- Submission of a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000, naming the City of Keene as an additional insured;
- Execution of a standard revocable license and indemnification agreement;
- Agreement by the Petitioner to cover any City service costs exceeding the allocated City funding, with payment due within 30 days of invoicing;

- Licensee is permitted to place 12 total portable toilets and one dumpster in City parking spaces located at the following locations: The base of Washington Street, Railroad Street, Roxbury Plaza from Friday, September 19, 2025 to Monday September 22, 2025, the portable toilets will be chained together and affixed to ensure they are not vandalized while unattended overnight;
- Submission of signed letters of permission from private property owners for any use of their property;
- Compliance with all required permits, licenses, applicable laws, and any recommendations from City staff.

The event footprint and layout shall include the traveled portions of Central Square, Washington Street from Vernon Street to Central Square, Court Street from Winter Street to Central Square, Roxbury Street from Roxbury Plaza (easterly side of Hannah Grimes Parking Lot) to Central Square, West Street from Federal Street to Central Square, Main Street northbound from Emerald Street/Eagle Court to Central Square, Railroad Square, Railroad Street from Roxbury Plaza to Church Street. Road closures may also extend to other streets as necessary for detour routes, with final closure and detour plans determined in coordination with City staff. The event will take place from 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM, with setup and cleanup times to be coordinated with City staff. Free parking is granted under the City's free parking policy for designated spaces on Washington Street and Roxbury Plaza for equipment storage from September 22, 2025, as well as for event footprint on the day of the festival.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.3.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Otto's Food and Drink - Request for Permission to Serve Alcohol - Sidewalk Café

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Otto's Food and Drink be granted permission to serve alcoholic beverages in connection with their Sidewalk Café License, subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, compliance with the requirements of Sections 46-1191 through 46-1196 of the City Code, and compliance with any requirements of the NH Liquor Commission. This license shall expire on March 1, 2026.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley welcomed the applicant, Kaycie Meyerrose (of 1182 Nelson Rd., Nelson, NH), Owner of Otto's Food and Drink, who had taken over the former Machina Kitchen and Art Bar. She thought it would be a great addition to their regular service to serve alcohol on their patio this summer within the same space as before but a little more spacing than they had seen previously for more access to the park. Otherwise, no additional seating was planned, and the intention was to pull everything against the building. Ms. Meyerrose hoped to be able to serve the community in a larger capacity this summer.

Chair Bosley asked if there were staff comments. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, said no. This license was before the Committee because all first-time requests to serve alcohol in Sidewalk Cafés must appear before the Committee. However, she said this owner intended to follow a very similar one to get their License, and all the normal requirements would be met.

There were no public comments.

Councilor Haas made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Vice Chair Jones.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Otto's Food and Drink be granted permission to serve alcoholic beverages in connection with their Sidewalk Café

License, subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, compliance with the requirements of Sections 46-1191 through 46-1196 of the City Code, and compliance with any requirements of the NH Liquor Commission. This license shall expire on March 1, 2026.

Chair Bosley asked if it was unusual for the license to have an expiration date. The City Manager explained that the March 1 expiration date was placed on all Sidewalk Café Licenses; this would be the first for this location. The City Manager confirmed that this would be permission to serve alcohol in conjunction with the Sidewalk Café License. After receiving permission to serve alcohol, it would follow the Sidewalk Café License, and License renewal happens via administrative approval by the City Clerk's office in future years.

Chair Bosley welcomed Otto's Food and Drink to downtown Keene.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.4.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Policy on the Discharge of Fireworks

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the City Attorney draft an Ordinance on fireworks that would incorporate the PLD Committee's recommendations.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley recalled that this was an ongoing conversation the Committee began at the end of 2024 after receiving multiple requests to have fireworks displays at an individual location. She said one particular location in town seemed to bear the brunt of these displays, but it could be at other locations similarly. So, the Committee wanted to address the City's policy on minimizing the impact on different neighborhoods. She asked to hear from Councilor Robert Williams, who had initiated this request.

Councilor Williams said the purpose of his letter was to determine the City's policy. In 2024 at Alumni Field, there were four requests for fireworks displays, and it was later determined that one was a non-commercial fireworks display. He said there was a concern about a situation in which non-commercial fireworks were competing with commercial fireworks and a potential loophole to avoid a permit for these displays; he hoped to hear from the Fire Marshal about that. Councilor Williams cited many reasons he thought it was important to recognize the impact of fireworks in the community, both positive and negative. He enjoys 4th of July fireworks as much as everyone else but was unsure about the displays in other months. One of his concerns is the environmental impact, citing Keene's wonderful wildlife—like the turkey vulture outside his house—who are scared by the explosions. At this point, there would be less of the environment to appreciate in the City. He also cited domestic animals like horses and dogs being scared by fireworks. Additionally, fireworks affect people who have sensory issues, including those with autism and veterans with PTSD. For all those reasons, Councilor Williams thought it would be a good idea to look at spreading the fireworks displays around the city so there would be less of an impact on Alumni Field.

Chair Bosley requested comments from the City's Fire Marshal/Building & Health Official, Rick Wood, who the Chair had spoken with about recent changes at the state level. Mr. Wood said one of his only concerns since this came up had been how to make an enforceable rule. In that discussion, one of the big questions was in the City's Ordinance, which says consumer fireworks can be shot without a permit. Still, there are consumer firework shows at certain locations shot by actual licensed shooters, meaning more for display than consumer. Mr. Wood explained that the State of NH recently changed its administrative rules about the Use of Permissible Fireworks by Other Than Consumers (Saf-C 2607.06). A new subsection, "h," was added to require that anyone shooting consumer fireworks other than the consumer—meaning a display—have a Certificate of Competency, the same certificate issued to a licensed display. Mr. Wood said this would make it much easier for the City to figure out who falls under a licensing requirement, providing what the City would need for the Committee to consider policy decisions on any limitations.

Chair Bosley said she spoke with the City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, to provide the Attorney with guidance about what the Chair thought might be reasonable language to consider. Chair Bosley offered that language to the Committee earlier on the day of this meeting. She said some concerns came up as she thought about it this evening, one of which she wanted the Committee to discuss—an appropriate number of times per calendar year for displays at a particular location and how to issue those permits. She feared that one license holder might come in and request all the licenses for one location for the whole year if the City did not have some practice in place to look at all the requests for potential displays over a year at the location at once to more fairly distribute permits. She wanted to find a way to defer to the 4th of July celebration and honor that tradition in the community.

Vice Chair Jones questioned how to define "location." One year, there were some fireworks at Alumni Field but also three weddings at Keene Country Club with fireworks, only 1.5 blocks away. Would that be one location or two? Mr. Wood thought the only logical way to discern a location would be to use the Tax Parcel Map, which would essentially be tied to ownership, and landowners must provide permission for fireworks displays; he did not think there would be a way to say "regions" of the City, for example. Mr. Wood wondered if the landowners could determine the number of times per year on their properties and who gets priority. Vice Chair Jones agreed that this would likely be the best method. The Vice Chair was still concerned with the potential for displays affecting the same neighborhoods repeatedly, and he was unsure there was a way to avoid that. Mr. Wood agreed it was difficult for him to contemplate a way.

Councilor Haas said it sounded like there were two things the Committee wanted. First, the overall goal is to limit the number of fireworks displays licensed yearly, with the knowledge that consumers can shoot fireworks as much as they want. 4th of July would be aside; perhaps the licensed group could change year-to-year. He suggested limiting the total number of licenses and then working to distribute those licenses fairly, citing the potential for a lottery as an example. Second, Councilor Haas wanted to have some time frame around this—he knew there was a suggested time frame of May 1—and suggested seeking feedback from the people who contract for fireworks about the timing they need to contract so the City can provide sufficient licensing time. He said having clear License applications and issuance dates would give people a fair chance at obtaining those licenses, and then the City could be responsive when needed. Councilor Haas saw a lot of work to be done regarding the number of events over the year—he envisioned no more than five but was much more partial to three—and fair distribution. Chair Bosley asked if Councilor Haas suggested that number Citywide or by location. Councilor Haas said citywide. He said that while there tended to be a focus on one location, if another wanted to have a celebration and fairly applied for an available license, so

be it. Chair Bosley asked if Councilor Haas would be comfortable with something like five licenses over a season in the municipality, only three at any given location. Councilor Haas said yes. Councilor Williams said he supported Councilor Haas' suggestions.

There were no public comments.

Councilor Haas asked if the City Attorney needed any other guidance from the Committee, and the Attorney said she was waiting to hear the Committee's motion. She recalled the Councilor's comment about wanting more information from people seeking the licenses, which the City Attorney would not collect, and assumed that would happen in the Committee setting. The Committee could recommend that the Attorney draft something, and then the Committee could collect that input. Councilor Haas suggested leaving out the number of times per location, which could be subject to debate for the Committee to fill in later and otherwise provide a structure to work with.

Chair Bosley said she would be more comfortable limiting it to five times throughout the City over a year, a maximum of three times per location. She was unsure if there was background research to ensure the City provided a date that gives people enough time to apply for the license, but did not think many people would come to the meeting to debate, leaving it to the Committee to determine what it is comfortable with. The City Manager said that if the City were to notify a property owner that they are limited to three displays per year, they could decide which three to put forward at any time of the year, but they would run the risk of the total of five displays being met. I think we should leave it up to the property owner to decide whom they would grant permission to, and they should know they are only allowed to grant three permissions. Chair Bosley said she was comfortable with that. Vice Chair Jones asked who would be policing that process—the Clerk's office? The City Manager said no, the fireworks licenses would all still come through the PLD Committee. Vice Chair Jones asked who would limit them to five per year. The City Manager thought the permit language would need to be changed when the Ordinance changes to have additional language clarifying that there is a limitation. Vice Chair Jones asked if there was no state application at this time. Mr. Wood said that as a part of the recent update, you must apply to the State of NH for the display of permissible or non-permissible fireworks, with sign-off by the Fire Department. So, Vice Chair Jones said the City did not need its own application process. Mr. Wood said the City did need its application process through the City Clerk's office.

The whole Committee expressed support for the City Attorney drafting language for first reading.

Chair Bosley made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Madison.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the City Attorney draft an Ordinance with PLD Committee's recommendations presented to Council for first reading.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.5.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Withdrawal: Ordinance O-2024-18 - Relating to Licenses and Permits**

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Ordinance O-2024-18, which was introduced by City staff be withdrawn.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley welcomed staff comments. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, explained that Ordinance O-2024-18 was brought forward by the City Clerk and the Public Works Director in October 2024 in anticipation of the downtown construction project. There were concerns at the time about needing to create additional restrictions in the Ordinance that would authorize the Public Works Director to decide—because of the construction project—to not issue licenses for part of the year or potentially all of the construction season. That concept was met with resistance from the PLD Committee, which directed staff to revisit the Ordinance language again to develop more flexibility and additional options for Sidewalk Café Licenses during the construction phase. As such, the Clerk's office thought it was appropriate to dispense with this more time item that was on the Committee's agenda by withdrawing the Ordinance.

The City Manager continued, explaining that there was the first follow-up outreach meeting for the license holders on April 7 with the Public Works Director to discuss how he thought the Sidewalk Café Licenses would work during different phases of active construction. Different zones downtown would be under active construction at different times. For example, Central Square would be phase one, and one block might be an active construction zone for three weeks with no permits allowed there because the ground would be disturbed. However, in other areas of the construction phase around Central Square, there could be permits, but the license holders would need to understand that there would be dust, noise, and disruption; but they would still have that choice. Public Works would announce the active construction zones seven days in advance to give the License holders time, and the Clerk's office would add language to the License that would allow the City to operate within a licensed footprint during the active construction zones in case of emergency (e.g., a water line break) and modify the licensed footprint conditions as required for public use of the sidewalk and

Americans with Disabilities Act conditions. Otherwise, the typical requirements for café fencing, sidewalk clearances, access to egress and stores would all remain the same and still need to be enforced. The City Manager thought this would provide the additional flexibility the PLD Committee was seeking and provide License holders the option of whether to operate during their phase of construction. She said that during the April 7 meeting, no concerns were addressed during this part of the conversation. Concerns were mentioned later about the design and how Sidewalk Cafés would look after construction that the City Manager thought would be discussed further with the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee. For the PLD's purposes, the City Manager thought staff found the most flexible possible way for Sidewalk Café Licensing during the construction phase.

Chair Bosley asked the Committee's course of action and the City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, said the Committee could accept withdrawing the Ordinance as informational for the record. Chair Bosley thanked the Clerk's office for its willingness to hear the Committee, be flexible, and think outside the box about everything the Committee was hoping for—allowing business owners to operate in some capacity with phases of construction. She applauded the Clerk's office and Public Works Department for being open to that. She also applauded staff for working toward having an Ombudsman to work in conjunction with these business owners, ensuring these things happen and all this information is disseminated smoothly to help the project be perceived positively. The City Manager agreed that the Public Works Director and Clerk's office have developed a good compromise that would offer as much flexibility as possible, while also maintaining safety in the downtown.

There were no public comments.

Councilor Williams made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Vice Chair Jones.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends accepting the withdrawal of Ordinance O-2024-18 as informational.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.6.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Acceptance of 2025 Wellness Grant**

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept the 2025 Wellness Grant from HealthTrust of up to \$2,500 to be used for employee wellness activities.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Director Elizabeth Fox addressed the Committee first regarding the Wellness Grant from Health Trust in an amount of up to \$2,500. She stated the wellness coordinators organize activities for employees that focus on a variety of things to benefit employees.

Ms. Fox stated that the Fire Department was also fortunate this year and received a grant from Health Trust. They have a group that works on their activities independently.

Councilor Chadbourne made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Lake.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept the 2025 Wellness Grant from HealthTrust of up to \$2,500 to be used for employee wellness activities.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.7.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Life Insurance and Long Term Disability Insurance

Recommendation:

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute a new multi-year contract renewing coverage with Symetra to administer the City's Life and Long-Term Disability Insurance program.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Ms. Fox stated that the next item concerns renewal of the City's life insurance and long-term disability insurance. The City is coming to the end of a two-year cycle with its current vendor Symetra. Richards Group, the broker for these products, put out an RFP proposal and received two competitive responses from Symetra and Mutual of Omaha. Because the City is satisfied with the current vendor and the prices were the same, staff is recommending that the Manager be authorized to move forward with renewal through Symetra. This will be another two-year agreement, which will give the City some stability in the budget process for the next two cycles.

The Chairman asked whether this program was available for retirees. Ms. Fox stated that the City is not able to offer this coverage to retirees. She explained that when employees leave the City, they have the opportunity to convert their policy to an individual policy for the life component. However, the long-term disability is only available to current employees.

Councilor Lake made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 4-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to execute a new multi-year contract renewing coverage with Symetra to administer the City's Life and Long-Term Disability Insurance program.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.8.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: **Acceptance of Local Source Water Protection Grant**

Recommendation:

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept, execute, and expend a Local Source Water Protection Grant from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) in the amount of \$12,800.00.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Assistant Public Works Director/Operations Manager, Aaron Costa stated the Court Street and West Street well fields are a valuable source for the City. He noted the City has three groundwater wells at Court Street and one at West Street. They produce approximately 2,000,000 gallons a day of drinking water for the City of Keene. They are located on City-owned property, but no property boundaries are defined at Court Street.

Mr. Costa stated the City did some surveying work at West Street in 2023 with Source Water Protection grant funds. Still, the City does not own the 400-foot sanitary protective radius at either location.

The City is going to use these funds to hire a qualified surveyor to perform a detailed property survey at both locations. Once that is complete, staff will have a better idea of where those property boundaries are and where that 400-foot sanitary radius is.

Councilor Remy joined the session at 6:06 PM.

Councilor Lake stated he noticed in the notes about pursuing the purchase of property or easements and installing fencing along the property borders to be in compliance. He stated he did not see that anywhere in Section 302.1 and asked if this was the procedure the City wanted to pursue or whether it was somewhere else in the 302 section that he might have missed. Mr. Costa stated he wasn't sure what that regulation indicates, but it is Best Management Practice to install fencing along the 400-foot

sanitary protective radius. The Councilor asked whether there was a specific rationale for this. Mr. Costa stated that this is to keep abutters and others out of the protective radius and retain it in its natural state.

Councilor Roberts made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Chadbourne.

On a 5-0 vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept, execute, and expend a Local Source Water Protection Grant from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) in the amount of \$12,800.00.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #H.1.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Councilor Jones - Request for Resolution (Declaration) Honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends placing the Request for Resolution Honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community on more time.

Attachments:

None

Background:

Chair Bosley asked to hear Vice Chair Jones' ideas. The Vice Chair recalled when, in 2021, he presented the City with the idea to create a resolution to honor the LGBTQIA+ community. In consultation with the then City Attorney and Mayor, the best decision was to create the City's Declaration of Inclusion, which Vice Chair Jones said was very popular. Copies of the Declaration of Inclusion hung in the City Hall lobby, and more than 30 others were requested for other locations across the City, like the Library, Recreation Center, Cheshire Medical Center, Keene State College, several banks, and some senior living centers. Vice Chair Jones paid to frame them all. Now, he would ask staff to draft an updated Declaration of Inclusion with refreshed language submitted from the community and Councilors, such as changing "lifestyles" to "sexual orientation and gender identity" for better representation. Then it could come back to the Committee for final wordsmithing. He had received many emails about this since submitting his letter to the Council. He had also met with people from various communities in the City. Vice Chair Jones recalled that there were different mediums possible: (1) a Proclamation written and signed by the Mayor, (2) a Resolution the Council must adopt and is signed by the Mayor, and (3) a Declaration, which is not codified, voted on as a City Council body, and every voting member that feels comfortable is welcome to undersign the declaration. Vice Chair Jones' intention was to proceed with updating the City's existing Declaration of Inclusion, but he wanted to hear from the public.

Councilor Haas asked whether the Vice Chair's intent would be to revise the existing plaques and circulate new ones. Vice Chair Jones said no, the Declarations from that period of time would not change, there would just be a new Declaration. He thought that, like last time, the Clerk's office could print them on parchment-like paper to be framed, which the Vice Chair said he was willing to

accommodate again. Chair Bosley also suggested offering the current Declaration holders the updated copies to place in their original frames. Vice Chair Jones agreed, or said they could have both, reiterating that the new Declaration would not detract from the first Declaration.

Chair Bosley opened the floor to public comments.

Mohammad Saleh, member of the City's Human Rights Committee (HRC), thanked and applauded Councilor Jones for taking a very timely step in revising the Declaration. Mr. Saleh said this was a very difficult time, with a lot of people feeling marginalized, so he called it admirable to be more inclusionary and empowering in the phrasing and to not try to hide behind social prejudice. He requested the HRC's participation in the review and updating process. Vice Chair Jones agreed that he was planning to visit the Committee. Mr. Saleh was one of the first recipients of the original Declaration, which was still in his office.

Adam Toepfer, President of the Keene Pride Board, called this a great idea. He encouraged expanding upon the Declaration, suggesting that Keene should be a sanctuary City for the LGBTQIA+ community. As the owner of Madame Sherri's, Mr. Toepfer knew that members of this community were terrified daily—calling it an understatement. He knew the Council could not control anything that was happening at the state or national levels, but Mr. Toepfer thought creating a sanctuary city for the LGBTQIA+ community in Keene would show something big.

Mayor Jay Kahn thanked Vice Chair Jones for bringing this forward. The Mayor thought it would be valuable to incorporate language from the state Anti-Discrimination Act (NH RSA 354-A). He also pointed out that age was not a part of the 2021 Declaration, and he thought it should be incorporated in alignment with the statute. He agreed with the recommended action to ask the City Attorney to draft appropriate language—with input from groups like the HRC—to update the Declaration; it was not time-sensitive and would lay a path for returning to this Committee for final wording to recommend to City Council. Mayor Kahn agreed with the importance of updating the language to the appropriateness of the times and recognizing constituencies the City does not want to ignore. Vice Chair Jones agreed that this was not time-sensitive, and he would rather take the time and be very careful in crafting appropriate language.

Councilor Haas asked for more details about the recommended process. Chair Bosley questioned whether this matter could be placed on more time while this language was being updated through the City Attorney's Office and Human Rights Committee. Then it would return to the Committee for a recommendation to the Council. The City Attorney, Amanda Palmeira, said there would not be an official process for the matter, leaving this Committee and going through the HRC; for that to happen, Vice Chair Jones or someone else would have to seek that input while it is on more time. That made the most sense to Chair Bosley, so this work would begin without waiting for another Council cycle. Vice Chair Jones agreed, stating that he would work out those logistics as long as staff understood their directions.

Councilor Madison made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Haas.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends placing the Request for Resolution Honoring the LGBTQIA+ Community on more time.

A brief discussion ensued about the use of the word "Resolution" vs. "Declaration" in the motion. Councilor Madison clarified that it was listed as a Resolution on the agenda item.

Councilor Jones said he would present his ideas to the HRC and bring back a draft updated Declaration of Inclusion for the Committee's review.



CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #K.1.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025
To: Mayor and Keene City Council
From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee
Through:
Subject: Relating to Adopting the Provisions of RSA 79-E "Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive"
Resolution R-2025-09

Recommendation:

On a vote of 5-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2025-09.

Attachments:

1. Resolution R-2025-09
2. Draft_79_E_Update_2025_withZoning

Background:

Chair Bosley welcomed the Economic Development Director, Med Kopczynski, who was tasked by the City Manager with a number of projects related to housing opportunities, one of which was related to NH RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive. Mr. Kopczynski explained that there were two sections of 79-E the community might want to adopt: 79-E:4-b & 79-E:4-c, which was the genesis for why he was before the Committee, but not what he was present to talk about; there would be a request for proposals (RFP) opening to hire a consultant separately to address this issue. Mr. Kopczynski was present because when he began reviewing 79-E, he found that the City map was outdated and reflected the old downtown Zoning. He presented a 2024 map to the Committee that represented the City's new Land Development Code designations. He noted that by the time the City Council would adopt it, the City Clerk's office would update it to reflect 2025. Mr. Kopczynski welcomed questions. Chair Bosley said she thought this was a great program to have available in the City, noting that she was excited about some potential for it to expand.

Vice Chair Jones said that when the City first introduced this in 2017, it was more for corporate and industrial, and since then, 79-E morphed more toward commercial and mixed-use. Mr. Kopczynski said 79-E was originally for historic building preservation and renovation. Some communities designate one area and others the whole community. He said the Vice Chair was correct that the Statute had morphed through the years, as it was not originally designed for housing per se and now included housing components. Mr. Kopczynski did not anticipate more changes to 79-E as the

legislature worked on some of these housing issues. As the state had changed, Vice Chair Jones asked if the City had updated its Ordinance accordingly. Mr. Kopczynski said no if looking at 79-E:4-b & 79-E:4-c, two specific sections of the statute the Council had not adopted.

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, reiterated that the Community Development Department was getting ready to undertake a project with an RFP for a consultant to see how the City might be able to take advantage of some of the other 79-E opportunities.

Councilor Haas thought it was great for the City to use 79-E wherever possible and agreed with moving forward looking for opportunities in the future. He asked for clarification on Resolution R-2025-09 as presented. Item 9 on the list of qualifying structures referenced “a home energy score,” which the Councilor presumed was the U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings Initiative Home Energy Score. Councilor Haas said that should be clarified exactly. Mr. Kopczynski said there was an actual application package that went along with that and explains all the different sections as a method of scoring for the City Council. Chair Bosley pointed out that what Councilor Haas’ was referencing was already an adopted program in the community and Councilor Haas was looking at the adopted version (i.e., no red lines). The only change would be the map.

Councilor Williams said he likes the 79-E program but could only recall a few 79-E projects the Council had ever voted on, so he asked if there was anything the City could do to make it more popular. Chair Bosley said yes, she assumed hiring the consultant to expand the program would be the direction. She thought some projects at this time could take advantage of 79-E in its current form, but the expanded map would allow the City to offer tax relief for rehabbing the older housing stock to more people. She thought the Committee needed language to provide guidance on how to do that correctly. Mr. Kopczynski said that the 79-E program needed to be advertised more overall from an economic development perspective, and Chair Bosley mentioned a social media update.

Councilor Madison asked if the current update would increase the amount of housing stock eligible for 79-E. Chair Bosley said no. Councilor Madison said that was disappointing. Chair Bosley agreed, but said that part would be coming, recalling that a consultant would be hired to draft language to create that. This update, Chair Bosley explained, would allow the current language to be applied to the Zoning Map. The Zoning Map now identified the old, incorrect downtown zones. That clarified things better for Councilor Madison. He was still at a loss because the High-Density Zone was not included in the Resolution and he thought High Density would fit in with the spirit of 79-E, citing properties that would be ideal outside of downtown. It did not make sense to him. Mr. Kopczynski said this evening’s exercise was to change the map. However, he agreed with Councilor Madison’s point, which was one of the reasons the City was seeking the consultant, because 79-E was originally about designating a downtown Central Business District. That was expanded during former Mayor George Hansel’s term to include the Marlboro Street Corridor as an extension of downtown. Mr. Kopczynski thought there was a reasonable case for including the High-Density Zone for the residential property revitalization zone section of 79-E, a case for some plain housing development under 79-E:4-c, and he also listed changes the City had made to the Commerce District, especially on West Street, that were arguably an extension of downtown. Mr. Kopczynski looked forward to more of these vigorous and useful conversations on 79-E for the community’s long-term health. He called 79-E a useful tool for building renovation and housing expansion (e.g., housing tracts).

The City Manager quoted the first line of RSA 79-E, “It is declared to be a public benefit to enhance downtowns and town centers with respect to economic activity,” which is the original 79-E language the City of Keene adopted. The other changes came later that the Council had not adopted yet. She

thought going through this process to understand how the Council might want to adopt those other changes would be worthwhile.

Chair Bosley agreed with Councilor Madison that she was excited to see this expanded, citing the RFP for a consultant to help with that. The Chair added that with the modern cost of renovation, there is a huge opportunity to provide any sort of tax relief to people trying to improve property adjacent to downtown—or if expanded into some commercial areas. She said it would only bring longevity to the community.

The City Manager spoke about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a tool the City had not been able to use because of the cost to build an ADU, even within an existing structure (e.g., garage), despite all the recent changes. The City Manager said there might be potential to create a program within 79-E to help offset the initial expenses and meet some of the City's housing goals. Mr. Kopczynski said it was a great point. He did not think the community talked a lot about the cost of things. He cited his discussions about ADUs at the state level and people being unhappy about it still costing \$350.00 per square foot to build. He said 79-E allows for working with a funding stack, which might make the important difference in whether a project goes forward.

Councilor Williams asked how the funding for the 79-E consultant would be impacted by what was happening with the budget at this time. The City Manager said the City had the authorization to move forward with this small Housing Opportunity Planning Grant (Invest NH). The City had applied for a few initiatives (e.g., looking at short-term rentals) that were not approved. To date, the City Manager said the state had approved of the Housing Opportunity Planning Grant program. Councilor Williams heard some concern that the Housing Champions Fund would not get further money, and the City Manager said she heard the same and the City would have to monitor the program moving forward. As an aside, Mr. Kopczynski said Invest NH was looking forward to the 79-E work the City was doing, if it moved forward, because no one else in the state had hired a consultant to look at it quite this way. Keene would be setting a precedent. Chair Bosley loved that. Vice Chair Jones added, as a long-term consultative selling teacher, that he met with someone in industrial and business real estate who asked what he could do. The Vice Chair advised him to be the expert on 79-E and Economic Revitalization Zones to gain customer points.

There were no public comments.

Councilor Haas made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Councilor Madison.

On a vote of 5–0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the adoption of Resolution R-2025-09.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

A RESOLUTION RELATING TO ADOPTING THE PROVISIONS OF RSA 79-E “COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE”

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E “Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive” (hereinafter “RSA 79-E”) declares it a public benefit to enhance downtown and town centers with respect to economic activity, cultural and historic character, sense of community, and in-town residential uses that contribute to economic and social vitality; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E further declares it a public benefit to encourage the rehabilitation of underutilized structures in urban and town centers as a means of encouraging growth of economic, residential, and municipal uses in a more compact pattern, in accordance with RSA 9-B.; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E also declares it a public benefit to provide short-term property assessment tax relief and a related covenant to protect public benefit in order to encourage substantial rehabilitation and use of qualifying structures, or in certain cases, the replacement of qualifying structures, as described herein; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E:3 permits municipalities to adopt modifications of the provisions of RSA 79-E, as set forth within the Statute.

WHEREAS, on December 21, 2017 the City Council adopted RSA 79-E within certain districts located within the City as defined in R-2017-41; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby rescinds R-2017-41, and readopts RSA 79-E in accordance with this Resolution;

WHEREAS, the downtown district map changed when the City adopted in May of 2021 with Ordinance O-2020-10-B the Land Use Code, along with the remapping of the City’s downtown zoning districts with Ordinance O-2020-11-A,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Keene that the Council hereby readopts and re-implements the provisions of RSA 79-E, with certain modifications, as follows:

A. For purposes of administering a RSA 79-E program within Keene, the City hereby defines that a “qualifying structure” shall mean a non-residential building, a mixed use building with residential uses occupying less than 50% of the gross living area, or a residential use building, being located within the area depicted on the map labeled “City of Keene Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-E) District” dated _____ attached hereto and made part of this Resolution.

B. For purposes of administering a RSA 79-E program within Keene, the City Council shall ensure that the proposed substantial rehabilitation provides one or more of the following public benefits, or that the proposed replacement provides one or more of the public benefits to a greater degree than would substantial rehabilitation of the same qualifying structure:

- I. It enhances the economic vitality of downtown areas;
- II. It enhances and improves a structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level, either independently or within the context of an historic district, town center, or village center in which the building is located;
- III. It promotes the preservation and reuse of existing building stock throughout a municipality by the rehabilitation of historic structures, thereby conserving the embodied energy in accordance with energy efficiency guidelines established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation;
- IV. It promotes efficient design, safety, and a greater sense of community in a manner consistent with the Keene Comprehensive Master Plan;
- V. It will add to the City’s employment base by creating at least one new, full-time job in Keene’s downtown area;
- VI. It directly supports the integration of public art in the downtown; or
- VII. It promotes development of a sustainable building stock in the downtown that achieves a nationally or internationally recognized green building standard (e.g. LEED, Green Globes, National Green Building Standard, and International Green Construction Code).
- VIII. It maintains owner occupancy of a residential building or it returns a residential building to owner occupancy;
- IX. It results in an increase in energy sustainability in conformance with the City adopted greenhouse gas initiatives as determined by a home energy score of at least six (6), and demonstrated carbon emission reduction of at least 10%.

C. “Substantial Rehabilitation” shall mean rehabilitation of a qualifying structure which costs at least \$75,000 and, in certain cases, replacement of a qualifying structure which costs at least \$75,000;

D. “Tax Relief Period” shall mean that for a period of up to five (5) years the property tax on a qualifying structure shall not increase as a result of the substantial rehabilitation or reconstruction thereof, beginning only upon completion of substantial rehabilitation or, in the case of a replacement structure, upon completion of its construction;

E. In accordance with RSA 79-E:5, the duration of the tax relief period for applications filed in Keene shall be considered in the context of each specific application and shall only provide that level of tax relief necessary in the discretion of the City Council to effectuate the specific targeted public benefit(s) outlined as determined by the City Council. By way of example, a qualifying project that is deemed by the City Council to provide one or two of the public benefits listed above

may be granted a tax relief period of up to two years, and a qualifying project that provides three or more public benefits may be granted a tax relief period of up to five years; provided, however, that in determining what, if any, tax relief duration to provide, the City Council may consider the impact the proposed substantial rehabilitation will have on existing, or required, City infrastructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a property owner, as a condition of being granted such tax relief, shall

A. Document the proposed public benefit(s) at the time of the application for tax relief under the Keene RSA 79-E program; and

B. Provide the City promptly with all information and documentation that the City may deem relevant for review of the application for such tax relief, as well as for review of the rehabilitation or replacement project under federal, state, and local laws, codes and regulations, as may be applicable; and

C. Grant to the City a Covenant ensuring that the structure shall be maintained and used in a manner that furthers the public benefit(s) for which the property tax relief was granted and shall require the property owner to obtain casualty insurance, and flood insurance, if appropriate, for twice the term of the tax relief granted; and

D. Grant to the City a lien against the property for the purpose of ensuring proper restoration or demolition of damaged structures and property; and

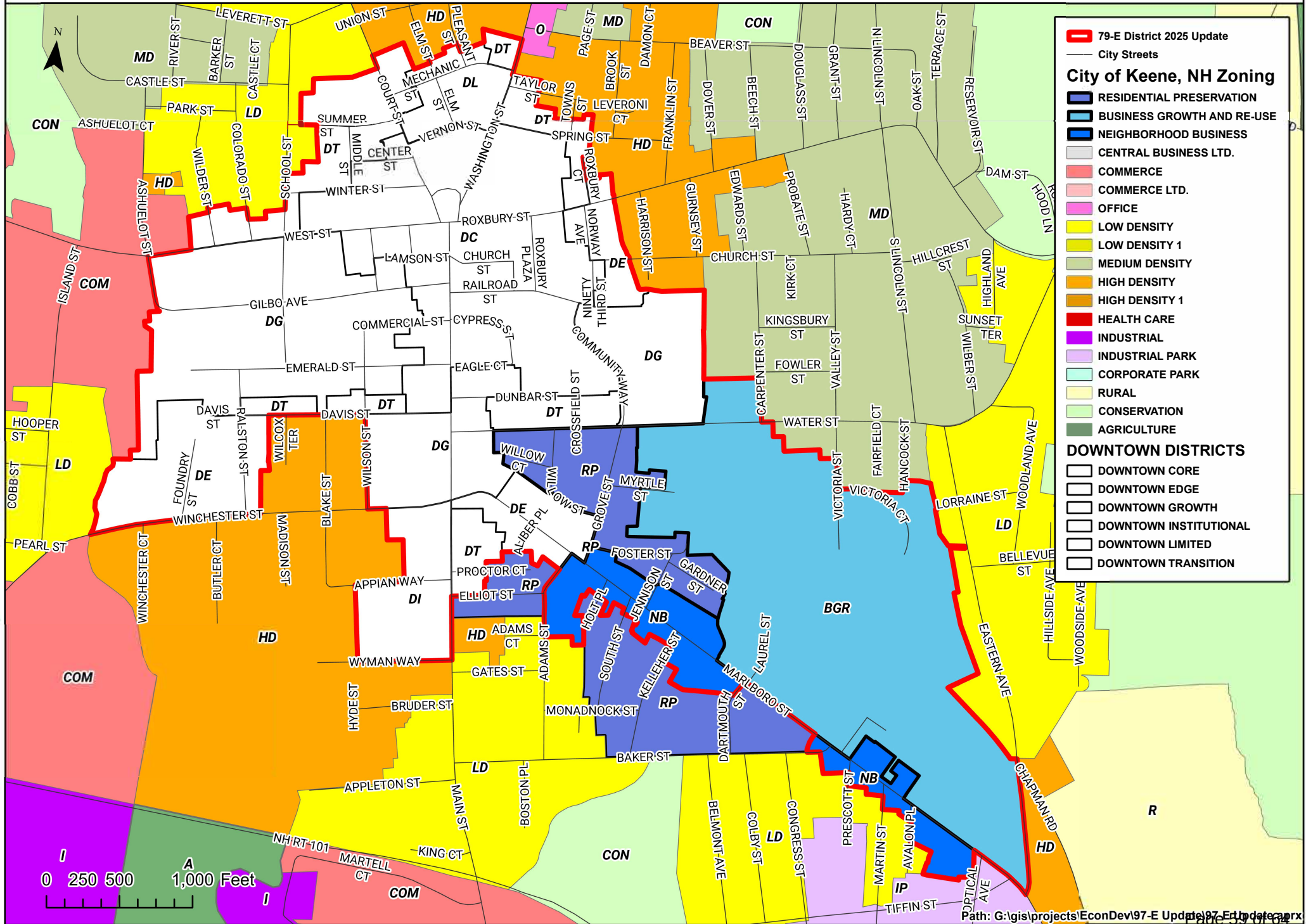
E. Maintain the property as taxable, regardless of whether the property owner is otherwise subject to property taxes under RSA Chapter 72; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the Covenant is terminated for any reason, the City shall assess all current and arrears taxes, with interest, to the property owner as though no tax relief was granted in accordance with RSA 79-E:9,II; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager or her or his designee, is hereby authorized to execute all documents and undertake all actions as may be required to implement this resolution.

This resolution shall take effect upon approval by City Council.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor





CITY OF KEENE NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #K.2.

Meeting Date: April 17, 2025

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance - Fire Department Staffing Resolution R-2025-11

Recommendation:

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution R-2025-11.

Attachments:

1. R-2025-11_Fire Staffing_referral

Background:

City Manager Elizabeth Ferland addressed the Committee next. The Manager stated the call volume at the Fire Department has risen significantly from 5,025 calls in 2019 to over 6,300 calls in 2024. During the same period, the department had nearly doubled its overlapping calls. She stated that these figures underscore the need to increase staffing capacity within the department. Tonight, the staff is asking the Committee to support a Resolution that would authorize the hiring of four additional firefighters or one per shift. The Resolution anticipates that these positions will be filled by the end of May. As such, the current appropriation request is just over \$70,000 and covers one month of wages and the necessary gear and equipment to bring on these four firefighters. This would increase staffing from 11 to 12 firefighters per shift. 12 is the minimum number required to operate a third ambulance.

The Manager went on to say that last week, the Council approved a Resolution to increase overtime funding so that the Chief could use existing staff to maintain this twelve-person staffing level. Currently, the department is calling in two people per shift due to one new member on each shift as the 11th member is still in training mode. Once that individual is fully counted towards the minimum staffing, only one call-in per shift will be required unless there are additional absences, vacation, FMLA, or sick leave. She stated that, unfortunately, this week, the department learned that one of the 11 members has resigned and is going back to the department he came from. This puts the department further behind on that shift. For FY26, the City anticipates an annual wage cost increase of approximately \$529,000 to fully fund these four positions. This would be included in the base

budget. In addition to the wages, there will be an increased operational expense for training and remaining equipment needs.

In January, the City Council authorized applying for a Safer Grant to fund four firefighters per shift (16 in total). If tonight's request is approved, the City will reduce the Safer Grant request of three per shift for a total of 12.

The Manager went on to say if the grant is not available, staff anticipates returning to the Council in FY26 with a request to again hire one additional firefighter per shift, bringing the total to 13. She indicated it is important to have more than 12 on a shift otherwise you are always filling with overtime when somebody is out. The Manager gave the presentation to the Fire Chief and the Deputy Chief.

Chief Martin expressed his appreciation to the Committee and all of City Council for their support. He indicated that the Manager had worked hard to fill a third ambulance, and the members felt relief immediately.

The Deputy stated that last year at this time, there were 1,638 calls per day, which is an average of 16 calls per day. Currently, they are at 1,898 calls for service, putting them at an average of 19 daily calls. Last year, they finished at 6,481 calls for service, and this year, they are projected for over 7,200, which he felt was a significant increase and adding the staff is important. He noted that they did lose one member to a resignation but are fortunate to have a good pool of applicants.

County Administrator Chris Coates addressed the Committee and stated he was here to speak in support of the City Manager's recommendation. He stated that New Hampshire is an aging state; we are in the top three in the state, and county-wise, we are in the top two in aging counties. Mr. Coates stated that when he was on the Council, there were 3,500 runs with nine individuals in the department, and that number has doubled. He felt this was the right direction for the City and appreciated the added funding. He felt overtime was a band-aid fix and risks burnout. He stated that Cheshire County's EMS service is here to support the City and has the highest regard and highest respect for the men and women of the Keene Fire Department. He noted they have been in the City 74 times, answering calls for the City and ready to support whenever needed.

Mr. Coates went on to say they have a great working relationship with the Keene Fire Department, and the two chiefs meet regularly to discuss how they can collaborate.

He noted that they have contractual agreements on some level with 19 communities in Cheshire County, but they deal with every community in Cheshire County either through 911, inter-facility transfer, or partnership with smart ride-around wheelchair services in the community. He felt this was money well spent.

Mr. Rob Skrocki, President Professional Fire Fighters of Keene expressed his appreciation to the Committee.

The Manager thanked the Committee, the Fire Department, and Mr. Coates. She noted that the editorial in the recent Keene Sentinel was inaccurate and stressed that the City is working with the county to address this issue and plans to set the record straight.

Councilor Remy made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Roberts.

On a 5-0 roll call vote, the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution R-2025-11.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

A RESOLUTION Fire Department Staffing – Relating to the Appropriation of Funds from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS: Resolution 2024-32 Relating to Fiscal Policies states all departments are authorized to vary actual departmental spending from line-item estimates provided the total department budget is not exceeded within each fund; provided however, that any item specifically eliminated by the City Council during the budget approval process cannot be purchased for another line item without City Council approval; and

WHEREAS: Any unexpended funds in a personnel line related to a vacancy cannot be expended without approval from the City Manager and the City Council unless funds are being expended to fill a vacancy, recruiting, or to employ temporary help including professional and contract services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that use of General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance in the amount of seventy thousand sixty-seven dollars (\$70,067.00) be used to fund the appropriation for four (4) new firefighters in the Fire Department budget as follows:

Personnel and related personnel expenses	\$38,707.00
Operating-related expenses	<u>\$31,360.00</u>
	\$70,067.00

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council April 3, 2025.
Referred to the Finance, Organization
and Personnel Committee.

City Clerk

